

# **Animal Health Safeguarding Review Implementation Progress Report July 2002**

## **I. Progress achieved in implementing the review:**

### Surveillance

- Leadership named for National Surveillance System – Dr. Valerie Ragan has been named Assistant Deputy Administrator, APHIS, Veterinary Services effective July 29<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Ragan will concentrate on the national surveillance system and function as a surveillance coordinator. Recommendation 1 in the Safeguarding Review called for the establishment of a national surveillance leadership position.
- Funds allocated for the development of an animal/animal product tracking system – APHIS has allocated \$2 million for the development of an animal and animal product tracking system. When fully developed, this system will integrate with existing interstate movement, Customs, and PPQ data systems to track animals and animal products from the point of manufacture to ultimate destination. Safeguarding Review recommendation #108 addressed expanding APHIS' ability to trace and control potentially infected animals and/or animal products.

### Response

- Draft Appraisal and Compensation Guidelines sent out for review – APHIS is in the process of preparing a suite of National Animal Health Emergency Management System guidelines. This suite of guidelines updates previous response plans and covers areas not dealt with in previous plans. In early July, the second set of draft guidelines, those dealing with Appraisal and Compensation, was sent out for external review. (Draft Disposal guidelines were sent out earlier this year). Several Safeguarding Review Recommendations addressed the need for updated response guidelines (#s 107, 110).
- APHIS holds third Emergency Management Concepts and Issues for Animal Health Managers course – On July 30 – August 6<sup>th</sup> APHIS held the final FY 2002 course for AVICS, State Veterinarians, and other animal health emergency managers in Orlando, Florida. These courses review the epidemiology of a number of foreign animal diseases, introduce participants to the Incident Command System, discuss how existing animal health emergency management operations interact within both an incident command system and the Federal Response Plan, and offer instruction in responding to intentional introductions of biological agents. Joint attendance of federal and state animal health officials at these sessions also works to improve communications and cooperative partnerships. Several Safeguarding Review recommendations addressed improving the management of emergency operations (#s 111, 123).

## Laboratory System

- National Animal Health Laboratory Network developments - Officials from the five Core and seven Satellite laboratories selected to receive Homeland Security funding met with APHIS and CREES personnel in July. These laboratories were selected to begin the establishment of a unified network of public agricultural institutions able to assist in identifying and responding to high-risk biological pathogens in the food and agricultural system. These laboratories have received funding for planning and are currently developing work plans for using the balance of their funds. Preliminary work plans are due by August 15, 2002, with final plans due by October 1, 2002. Several Safeguarding Review recommendations point toward the establishment of a national animal health laboratory system (#s 17, 74, 121)

## **II. Implementation activities:**

Comprehensive Plans detailing the key issues to be addressed by each of the APHIS Safeguarding Implementation Issue Groups were submitted by each issue group. These Comprehensive Plans also detail initial next steps to be undertaken by each group. Issue groups have now begun work on preparing Action plans to address their key issues.

Members of the Information Technology issue group carried out a site visit to the Virginia Avian Influenza Task Force to gather information on the effectiveness of current IT solutions in meeting task force needs and to identify other potential technologies which could benefit emergency operations.

Members of the Surveillance issue group are actively participating in identifying requirements for enhancements to the APHIS Generic Disease Database (GDB). Participation in the GDB requirements gathering phase will ensure that appropriate surveillance data are being collected and standard procedures are implemented which will facilitate the gathering of consistent, high quality data.